

## NEWS RELEASE

For Immediate Release:  
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### **State Health Department Urges People Who Take the Diabetes Medication Avandia To Consult Their Physicians**

BISMARCK, N.D. – People who have diabetes and use the medication Avandia should not stop taking it without consulting their physicians, according to Sherri Paxon, director of the Division of Chronic Disease for the North Dakota Department of Health.

A recent study published in the New England Journal of Medicine linked Avandia to a greater risk of heart attack and possibly death. Avandia (rosiglitazone maleate) is a drug used to treat type 2 diabetes, the most common form of the disease. Type 2 diabetes is linked to obesity and affects 18 million Americans. This form of diabetes occurs when the body does not make enough insulin or cannot effectively use what it manages to produce. Avandia works by sensitizing the body to insulin and was considered a breakthrough medication for blood sugar control.

Dr. Eric Johnson, a member of the Dakota Diabetes Coalition and the assistant medical director of the Altru Diabetes Center in Grand Forks, encourages diabetes patients to consult their physicians about the use of Avandia. “A patient’s physician or diabetes care team can best help the patient decide what medications he or she should take,” Johnson said. “It’s important for diabetes patients to maintain good blood sugar control at all times. This means evaluating their medication regimen carefully and in partnership with their doctors.”

For more information, contact Sherri Paxon, North Dakota Department of Health, at 701.328.2698 or [spaxon@nd.gov](mailto:spaxon@nd.gov).

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